

In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 1, 10-13, 21, 31-32, 40, 46, 49, 50, 60 and 68; and cancel Claims 9, 30 and 45, and add new Claims 71-72, all as shown below. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for modifying a list of permitted senders used by electronic mail (email) access control devices, said method comprising:

under control of a sender:

accepting a recipient identifier;

providing sender information along with a petition provider identifier to a recipient, the recipient having an access list of permitted senders associated therewith;

under control of the recipient:

providing the sender information to a petition provider identified by the petition provider identifier;

accepting, by way of a web browser on the recipient, an access list petition request (petition) from the petition provider, said petition being stored in a computer readable storage medium, wherein the petition is transmitted via hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) as part of an interaction with a web page;

determining whether the petition is acceptable based on at least one of: 1) a sender identity verification method; 2) user input; and 3) third party information; and

modifying said access list of permitted senders of the recipient such that the sender is added to said access list if the petition is determined to be acceptable; and

~~wherein the petition is created as a result of the sender receiving the recipient's email address; and~~

wherein the access list is used to determine whether email from the sender is permitted to reach the recipient.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein:
the sender information includes at least one of: 1) a sender identification method; and 2)
the recipient identifier.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing confirmation of the determination to the sender.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein:
the step of accepting the recipient identifier is a result of a Web-based interaction
between the recipient and the sender.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein:
the recipient identifier is an email address.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein:
the identity verification method is one of: 1) an email header "From" address; 2) a
password; 3) an Internet Protocol (IP) address; and 4) a digital signature.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein:
the step of determining whether a petition is acceptable utilizes at least one rule, wherein
the at least one rule is evaluated against the petition.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
prompting a user for a decision regarding whether or not to accept the petition.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[9]] 1 wherein:

the sender information is provided to the petition provider via a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) redirect sent to the Web browser.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[9]] 1 wherein:
the petition is provided to a petition processor via a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP)
redirect message sent to the Web browser; and
wherein the petition processor makes said determination.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[9]] 1 wherein:
the Web browser identifies the petition based on a Multipurpose Internet Mail Extension
(MIME) type.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[9]] 1 wherein:
the petition provider identifier and the sender information are combined to form a
Uniform Resource Locator (URL) that the Web browser uses to access the
petition provider.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing the petition to a petition processor.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein:
the petition processor requires authorization credentials.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein:
the sender identity verification method is used by an email provider to verify that an
email message is from the sender.

17. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein:
the petition provider generates the petition based on one or more rules.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein:

a rule determines at least one of: 1) whether to generate the petition; 2) a format of the petition; 3) an identity of a petition processor; and 4) a recipient email address.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein:
a rule is triggered based on the recipient identifier.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for modifying a list of permitted senders used by electronic mail (email) access control devices, said method comprising:

under control of a sender:

accepting a recipient identifier;
generating an access list petition request (petition) wherein said generation is based on the evaluation of at least one rule that determines the format of the petition based on the recipient identifier, said petition being stored in a computer readable medium;

providing the petition to a recipient, the recipient having an access list of permitted senders associated therewith;

under control of the recipient:

accepting the petition by way of a web browser on the recipient, wherein the petition is transmitted as part of an interaction with a web page and prior to transmission of email messages between the sender and the recipient;

determining whether the petition is acceptable based on at least one of: 1) a sender identity verification method; 2) user input; and 3) third party information;
and

modifying said access list of permitted senders of the recipient such that the sender is added to said access list if the petition is determined to be acceptable;

~~wherein the petition is created as a result of the sender receiving the recipient's email address and prior to transmission of email messages between said sender and said recipient; and~~

wherein the access list is used to determine whether email from the sender is permitted to reach the recipient.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, further comprising:
providing the recipient identifier to a petition provider; and
accepting a petition from the petition provider.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein:
the sender information includes at least one of: 1) a sender identification method; and 2)
the recipient identifier.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein:
the petition provider and the sender are part of the same system.

25. (Original) The method of claim 21 wherein:
the step of accepting the recipient identifier is a result of a Web-based interaction
between the recipient and the sender.

26. (Original) The method of claim 21 wherein:
the recipient identifier is an email address.

27. (Original) The method of claim 21 wherein:
the identity verification method is one of: 1) an email header "From" address; 2) a
password; 3) an Internet Protocol (IP) address; and 4) a digital signature.

28. (Original) The method of claim 21 wherein:
the step of determining whether a petition is acceptable utilizes at least one rule, wherein
the at least one rule is evaluated against the petition.

29. (Original) The method of claim 21, further comprising:
prompting a user for a decision regarding whether or not to accept the petition.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[30]] 21 wherein:
the petition is provided to a petition processor via a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP)
redirect sent to the Web browser; and
wherein the petition processor makes said determination.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[30]] 21 wherein:
the Web browser identifies the petition based on a Multipurpose Internet Mail Extension
(MIME) type.

33. (Original) The method of claim 21, further comprising:
providing the petition to a petition processor.

34. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein:
the petition processor requires authorization credentials.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 wherein:
the sender identity verification method is used by a petition processor to verify that an
email message is from the sender.

36. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein:
the petition provider generates the petition based on one or more rules.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36 wherein:
a rule determines at least one of: 1) whether to generate the petition; 2) a format of the
petition; 3) an identity of a petition processor; 4) a recipient email address.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36 wherein:
a rule is triggered based on the recipient identifier.

39. (Canceled)

40. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for modifying a list of permitted senders used by electronic mail (email) access control devices, said method comprising:

providing a recipient email address to the sender;

providing receiving a petition to the recipient wherein the petition is transmitted as part of a web browser-based interaction with a web page, prior to transmission of emails between the sender and the recipient and wherein the petition includes a sender identity verification method;

determining, by the recipient, whether the petition is acceptable based on authorization credentials and at least one of: 1) the sender identity verification method; 2) user input; and 3) third party information;

modifying an email access list of permitted senders at the recipient by adding the sender to said email access list if the petition and the authorization credentials are acceptable;

~~wherein the petition is created as a result of the sender receiving said recipient email address; and~~

wherein the email access list is used to determine whether or not email from the sender is permitted to reach the recipient.

41. (Original) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
providing confirmation of the determination to the sender.

42. (Original) The method of claim 40 wherein:
the step of providing the recipient email address to the sender is a result of a Web-based interaction between the recipient and the sender.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40 wherein:
the sender identity verification method is used by the recipient to verify that an email message is from the sender.

44. (Original) The method of claim 40 wherein:
the identity verification method is one of: 1) an email header "From" address; 2) a password; 3) an Internet Protocol (IP) address; and 4) a digital signature.

45. (Canceled)

46. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[45]] 40 wherein:
the Web browser identifies the petition based on a Multipurpose Internet Mail Extension (MIME) type.

47. (Original) The method of claim 40 wherein:
the step of determining whether a petition is acceptable utilizes at least one rule, wherein the at least one rule is evaluated against the petition.

48. (Original) The method of claim 40, further comprising:
prompting a user for a decision regarding whether or not to accept the petition.

49. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:
a means for providing a recipient email address to the sender;
a means for providing receiving a petition to the recipient wherein the petition is transmitted as part of a web browser-based interaction with a web page, prior to transmission of emails between the sender and the recipient and wherein the petition includes a sender identity verification method;
a means for determining, by the recipient, whether the petition is acceptable based on authorization credentials and at least one of: 1) the sender identity verification method; 2) user input; and 3) third party information;

a means for modifying an email access list of permitted senders at the recipient by adding the sender to said email access list if the petition and the authorization credentials are acceptable;

~~wherein the petition is created as a result of the sender receiving said recipient email address; and~~

wherein the email access list is used to determine whether or not email from the sender is permitted to reach the recipient.

50. (Currently Amended) A system for modifying a list of permitted senders used by electronic mail (email) access control devices, said method comprising:

a sender component ~~operable to accept~~ that accepts a recipient identifier and ~~generate~~ generates sender information, wherein the sender information ~~can be~~ is used to generate a petition;

a petition provider component ~~operable to generate~~ that generates a petition based on the sender information and at least one rule, said petition being stored in a computer readable medium; and

a recipient that receives the petition from the petition provider component by way of a web browser on the recipient, determines whether the petition is acceptable and modifies the email access list of permitted senders, wherein the petition is transmitted as part of a web browser-based interaction with a web page, prior to transmission of emails between the sender and the recipient and;

~~wherein the petition is generated as a result of the sender component receiving said recipient identifier; and~~

wherein the petition includes a sender identity verification method which is used to verify identity of the sender.

51. (Original) The system of claim 50, further comprising:

a web browser operable to accept the sender information from the sender component and provide the sender information to the petition provider component.

52. (Original) The system of claim 50, further comprising:

a petition processor component operable to accept the petition and determine whether the petition is acceptable based on at least one of: 1) the sender identity verification method; 2) user input; and 3) third party information; and wherein if the petition is acceptable, the sender component is permitted to send email to a recipient associated with the recipient identifier.

53. (Original) The system of claim 52, further comprising:
a web browser operable to accept the petition from the petition provider component and to provide the petition to the petition processor.

54. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 52 wherein:
the petition processor component provides a confirmation to the sender.

55. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 52 wherein:
the browser identifies the petition based on a Multipurpose Internet Mail Extension (MIME) type.

56. (Original) The system of claim 50 wherein:
the sender identification verification method is one of: 1) an email header "From" address; 2) a password; 3) an Internet Protocol (IP) address; and 4) a digital signature.

57. (Original) The system of claim 52 wherein:
the petition processor determines whether or not to accept a petition and add the sender to an email access list for a recipient.

58. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50 wherein:
the at least one rule determines at least one of: 1) whether to generate the petition; 2) a format of the petition; and 3) an identity of a petition processor.

59. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50 wherein:

the at least one rule is triggered based on the recipient identifier.

60. (Currently Amended) A machine readable medium having instructions stored thereon that when executed by a processor cause a system to:

accept a recipient identifier;

provide a petition to a recipient by way of a web browser on the recipient, said petition being transmitted to the recipient as part of a web browser-based interaction with a web page, wherein the recipient corresponds to the recipient identifier and wherein the petition is based on the evaluation of at least one rule, said recipient having an access list of permitted senders associated therewith;

determine whether the petition is acceptable based on at least one of: 1) a sender identity verification method; 2) user input; and 3) third party information; and modifying said access list of permitted senders of the recipient such that a sender associated with said petition is added to the access list if the petition is determined to be acceptable;

wherein the petition is created as a result of accepting the recipient identifier;

wherein if the petition is acceptable, the sender is permitted by the access list to send email to the recipient.

61 – 65. (Canceled)

66. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein modifying the access list adds the sender to at least one of: a white list of senders permitted to send email to the recipient and a black list of senders prohibited from sending email to the recipient.

67. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
communicating, from the recipient to the sender, a confirmation of the outcome of the petition that specifies whether the sender was added to the access list of the recipient.

68. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium having instructions stored thereon, which instructions when executed by one or more processors, cause a system to:
under control of a sender:

accept a recipient identifier;

provide sender information along with a petition provider identifier to a recipient, the recipient having an access list of permitted senders associated therewith;

under control of the recipient:

provide the sender information to a petition provider identified by the petition provider identifier;

accept, by way of a web browser on the recipient, an access list petition request (petition) from the petition provider, said petition being stored in a computer readable storage medium, wherein the petition is transmitted via hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) as part of an interaction with a web page;

determine whether the petition is acceptable based on at least one of: 1) a sender identity verification method; 2) user input; and 3) third party information; and

modify said access list of permitted senders of the recipient such that the sender is added to said access list if the petition is determined to be acceptable; and
~~wherein the petition is created as a result of the sender receiving the recipient's email address; and~~

wherein the access list is used to determine whether email from the sender is permitted to reach the recipient.

69. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 68 wherein modifying the access list adds the sender to at least one of: a white list of senders permitted to send email to the recipient and a black list of senders prohibited from sending email to the recipient.

70. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 68, further comprising instructions that cause the system to:

communicate, from the recipient to the sender, a confirmation of the outcome of the petition that specifies whether the sender was added to the access list of the recipient.

71. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said method is initiated by providing the recipient identifier to the sender as a part of a web browser-based interaction between the recipient and the sender.

72. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the recipient includes a petition processor integrated into said web browser, the petition processor determining whether the petition received from the petition provider is acceptable.